FIVE STEPS TO AN EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS MODEL:
IMPROVE BUSINESS RESULTS WITH ENGAGED EMPLOYEES
Your customers are coming to you via an ever-growing variety of channels: phone, e-mail, the corporate Web site and social media. As a result, every employee is now customer facing — either directly or indirectly — and distinctions between the front office and back office are blurring. With many more channels and a much more dispersed workforce, organizations today are forced to manage a dizzying array of customer service systems, customer touch points and customer-related tasks.

The question becomes: How do you make sure that employees possess the right skills and information to provide excellent service to your customers, while also effectively leveraging existing corporate systems and resources? And, how do you boost employee engagement to ensure that what employees do aligns with company objectives, increases profitability, and provides a competitive advantage?

The answer: By implementing an Employee Effectiveness Model that brings together a host of capabilities under a single umbrella to align training, job assignment, job scheduling, quality assurance and career development so that your workforce has the right skills to provide stellar service to customers.

Such a model should be built on the following five steps to ensure a more engaged, efficient and effective organization — one with happier employees, more satisfied customers and a much healthier corporate balance sheet.

**STEP 1: PLAN**
**STEP 2: DELIVER**
**STEP 3: CONTROL**
**STEP 4: ANALYZE**
**STEP 5: DEVELOP**
In most customer service operations, staff costs — such as salary and benefits — represent between 60-70 percent of operating expenses. As such, they add up to a major expense line item — an expense that can be incurred in the traditional front-office customer service operation, like the contact center, or by supporting customer service resources in the back office.

Despite the fact that the financial stakes are high, many companies don’t have a firm grasp on the characteristics and capabilities of their workforces, much less how those characteristics and capabilities impact the quality of customer service. For example, they fail to appreciate how important it is to understand and develop employee talent so that workers possess the skills needed for the digital age.

The premise behind an Employee Effectiveness Model is that if you can: Proactively identify workforce needs before they become critical; get the right insight into employee profiles and gaps; and provide the right training at the right time to ensure you have the right people in the right roles to achieve success, then you can quickly pinpoint passively engaged employees and shift them into being actively engaged ones. With an Employee Effectiveness Model, businesses can potentially sift out low-tier performers, continue to motivate the top-tier performers, and concentrate on moving mid-tier ones into the top tier through the right training.

An Employee Effectiveness Model brings together a host of capabilities under a single umbrella. Organizations may already have legacy systems in place to handle critical functions like quality assurance, workforce management, coaching, e-learning and customer feedback. However, such systems provide a “passive” approach and often remain siloed, creating latency delays, errors and overhead. As a result, executives are not getting the high-level view of workforce capabilities they need to identify and develop the talent their organizations require to keep pace with customer demands.

The best way to obtain such a view is by deploying a more “active” skills-centric approach that brings together all these disparate systems in a more dynamic way to manage customer-impacting resources. By providing a consistent view of resources, interactions and outcomes, an employee effectiveness model will give companies a suite of capabilities that provide a holistic approach to managing employee competencies and developing talent pools across the enterprise — all while minimizing overhead costs, enhancing productivity and, more importantly, increasing customer satisfaction as well as profitability.

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STEP 1: **PLAN**

Not all communications channels are equal, nor do they require the same skill sets for successful customer interactions. A good Employee Effectiveness Model recognizes this, and can forecast and schedule employees based on actual trends across voice, e-mail, chat, text, social media and work items to help organizations plan and optimize staffing across a variety of channels.

With the right employees communicating via the right conversation channels, these tools ensure that resources remain aligned by linking schedules with development plans, skills and training.

A good model should also include tight integration with routing to ensure that employees only receive customer interactions or work items that they have been trained to handle or that fall within their area of expertise. Thus, a phone support expert should not suddenly be required to interact with customers via Twitter, for instance, nor should customer service reps find themselves fielding questions about products they’ve yet to be trained on.
STEP 2: **DELIVER**

By measuring employee skill levels from the first day a new hire walks through the door to the last day he or she walks out, a good Employee Effectiveness Model provides employees with a development path through constant monitoring and coaching.

By tracking skill development in a centralized way, a leading-edge solution can automatically trigger updates for workforce management scheduling, training programs and routing strategies to ensure customer interactions and tasks are assigned to the workers best able to handle them.

Lastly, this helps you retain those employees who exhibit the most potential to become and remain engaged.
STEP 3: CONTROL

Once an organization has put a plan in place and defined key performance indicators (KPIs), a leading Employee Effectiveness Model will ensure that organizations are meeting service level agreements (SLAs).

By providing a centralized view of team and agent/employee performance metrics, the most innovative software allows companies to determine, monitor and identify employee behaviors, and to take immediate corrective action in real time at both the team and individual levels if they are not meeting established SLAs.

Organizations can even leverage these tools to provide employees with scorecards so that they can monitor their own progress as it relates to the specific goals they have been assigned.
Knowing what skills individual employees do or don’t possess is critical for routing customers to the right customer service representative. And successfully identifying and addressing any gaps in employee skills can make the difference between a customer having a positive experience or leaving you for a competitor.

By offering a wealth of analysis tools that takes advantage of both internal and external data, organizations can identify skill gaps in both teams and individual employees. What’s more, organizations can establish best-practice benchmarks and deploy interactive tests, evaluate quality scores from recorded contacts and screen captures, and perform customer feedback surveys and correlate these to get a 360-degree view of employee performance.

By feeding data into a single common skills repository, such tools can be used to identify those employees who are exceptional at their jobs, as well as those who require further coaching or training support.
STEP 5: DEVELOP

Once skill gaps and best employee practices have been identified, organizations can address these areas by dynamically creating, scheduling and managing custom-designed training and coaching programs at the most convenient times — given employees’ work schedules — without impacting service levels.

Delivering tools that help supervisors, schedulers, trainers and employees to monitor employee progress can ensure compliance with training plans, such as scheduled classroom and eLearning training, and help to improve employee morale and career paths.
CONCLUSION

Successful customer service organizations realize that maximizing employee potential is the key to success in both good times and bad. An effective employee model will help businesses to transcend merely weathering the current recession to flourishing in the new economy.

GENESYS WORKFORCE OPTIMIZATION — THE NEW BENCHMARK FOR EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS

Many other vendors’ workforce optimization approaches provide assessment and analysis tools, but lack the ability to control and manage all processes from one centralized location. Furthermore, they miss the ability to seamlessly integrate skills into the routing logic, deliver end-to-end analyses of employees’ career paths, or optimize both front- and back-office performance.

Genesys Workforce Optimization (WFO) allows businesses to flourish amidst increasing competition and volatile markets by breaking down silos and making information available to everyone who needs it. Genesys WFO is the industry’s first skills-centric approach to workforce optimization that centralizes management of employee competency requirements and gaps, controls costs by scheduling training that addresses those gaps, and seamlessly updates skills and competencies in the routing rules for accurate employee scheduling. By helping you develop the employee talent you need, Genesys WFO improves the customer experience by accurately pairing employee skills with customer needs to achieve better business results.